

In the Claims

Kindly replace the claims with the following amendments and new claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

software accessed at a provider computer, the software adapted to:

prompt the provider to input data concerning a workers' compensation claim,[the software adapted to] send an electronic claim number request containing at least some of the data across the Internet to a workers' compensation claim verification system; and

a workers' compensation claims verification system adapted to

receive the at least some of the data; and [to]

determine [therefrom any] a matching workers' compensation claim number associated with said data; and, if there is a matching workers' compensation claim number, the workers' compensation claims verification system is adapted to electronically supply the matching workers' compensation claim number to the provider computer, or if there is no matching workers' compensation claim number, the workers' compensation claims verification system automatically sends ~~is adapted to produce~~ an indication of the lack of determining the workers' compensation claim number to a selected one of a plurality of payer computers.

2. (Cancel) The system of Claim 1 wherein the indication is an electronic signal from the Workers' Compensation claims verification system to a payer computer.

3. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1 wherein the indication is a signal provided to other software systems co-located with the workers' compensation claims verification system.

4. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1 wherein the workers' compensation claims verification system electronically requests a workers' compensation claim number from a selected one of said plurality of payer computers.[payer computer.]

5. (Original) The system of Claim 1 wherein the software accessed at the provider computer is part of a workers' compensation medical treatment reporting system.

6. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1 wherein the software accessed at the provider computer is adapted to use the workers' compensation claim number [obtained from the Workers' Compensation claim verification system] to produce medical treatment reports including the Workers' Compensation claim number.

7. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, further comprising multiple providers, each having a provider computer [containing Workers' Compensation software], each of the provider computers being operably connected to the Workers' Compensation claim verification system across the Internet.

8. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system contains claim data for a number of payers.

9. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system is updated with data obtained from said payer computers.

10. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein said at least some of the data [sent across the Internet] includes name data, social security data, and injury date data.

11. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system is further adapted to:

[interface with a payer computer to] request a [W]workers' [C]compensation claim number using a database at a server, and [in response to a claim verification request from a provider computer received at the server database, retrieve a claim number from the database and] provide the claim number to the provider computer.

12. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 11, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system is further adapted to:

receive at least one claim numbers from said [any number of] payer computers; and

match the [payer] claim numbers with associated claim verification requests [received by the database from any number of provider computers].

13. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim

verification system is further adapted to:

receive ~~received~~ blocks a plurality of unassigned claim numbers from said payer computers and the Workers' Compensation claim verification system, and assigns claim numbers to injuries from the blocks of unassigned claim numbers in [1] response to claim verification requests received ~~by the Workers' Compensation claim verification system~~ from provider computers.

14. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system includes software that is adapted to allow a provider computer to access a payer computer, and payer computer to access the provider computer, for the purpose of requesting and supplying claim numbers.

15. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1, wherein the [W]workers' [C]compensation claim verification system is maintained at selected ones of said plurality of payer computers. ~~the payer computer.~~

Claims 16-54 (withdrawn).

55. (Currently Amended) A system for processing workers' compensation claim information comprising:

a computer programmed to accept information, which information may include a corresponding claim number, from a provider of medical services; said computer operative;

to transmit a subset of the information, including the corresponding claim number if the claim number is present in the information to a verification means comprising:

a database of workers' compensation information ~~rules~~ to reconcile workers' compensation billing data required by a recipient of the subset of information; and

an associated database wherein said databases are utilized to determine if the subset of the information includes a valid claim number, and

an indicator, wherein said databases are utilized to determine if the subset of the information includes a valid claim number, and if the subset of information does not include a valid claim number, the indicator produces an electronic signal that is transmitted to a payer computer.

56 (Currently Amended) A method for processing workers' compensation claim information comprising the steps of:

inputting information, which ~~information~~ may include a corresponding claim number, from a provider of medical services to a suitably programmed computer;

transmitting a subset of the information, including the corresponding claim number if the claim number is present, to a verification means wherein the steps of verification include:

accessing a database of workers' compensation information ~~rules~~ to reconcile workers' compensation billing data required by a recipient of the subset of information and an associated database, and

generating an indication ~~determining~~ if the subset of the information fails to include ~~includes~~ a valid claim number.

57. (cancelled)

58. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal ~~produced by the indicator~~ is an electronic mail message from the system for processing workers compensation claim information to a payer computer.

59. (Original) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator includes a valid claim number.

60. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator is transmitted ~~from the system for processing workers compensation claim information~~ to the provider of medical services ~~submitting the information~~.

61. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 55 wherein the database contains workers' compensation information ~~rules~~ sufficient to reconcile workers' compensation billing data for one or more recipients.

62. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim ~~55~~ 56 wherein the database of workers' compensation information ~~rules~~ for reconciling billing data required by a plurality of recipients, contains a subset of the rules that are applicable to a corresponding recipient, and the verification means is configured to apply the subset of rules for reconciling workers' compensation billing data required by the corresponding recipient.

63. (Cancelled) The method of claim 56 wherein the indicator includes a valid claim number.

64. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 56 further comprising the step of:
transmitting said ~~wherein the indicator is transmitted~~ to the recipient.

65. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 56 further comprising the step of:
transmitting said ~~wherein the indicator is transmitted~~ to the provider of medical services.

66. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 56 wherein the database contains workers' compensation information ~~rules~~ sufficient to reconcile billing data for one or more recipients.

67. (Currently amended) The method of claim 56 wherein the database of workers'
compensation information ~~rules~~ contains a hierarchy of rules for reconciling workers'
compensation billing data required by a plurality of recipients, wherein a subset of ~~which~~ said
rules are applicable to a corresponding recipient, and the verification means is configured to
apply the subset of rules for reconciling billing data required by the corresponding recipient.

68-69. (Cancelled)